4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

One of which the Santals call 'bangla orak' i.e. gable house. It is rectangular in form and is generally about 14 to 15 feet in length and 9 to 10 feet in breadth. The roof of this type is two sided. The other type of house is called by them 'Katom orak' i.e. umbrella house. In this house the roof is four sided. 342

The most common type of house the Santals build is the gable house. In constructing this house nine big posts are required, which are either got from the plot where they construct the house or are purchased. These nine posts are sunk in the ground in three rows, each row consisting of three posts. The middle one they fix a little longer than those of the two sides. Horizontally on the posts of the three rows, three big heavy beams are placed. Three cross beams are then fixed on both sides. These cross beams are tied with the middle and side posts. Then a number of rafters are tied over the cross beams. A frame work of split-bamboo is then fixed over it. For roofing, they generally use paddy straw or a special type of grass. This they get in abundance in the forest, and it is stronger and more durable than paddy straw. On the sides of each house is a platform measuring two to two and a half feet in width and the length is equal to that of the room. The floor of the rooms and the platforms are made of beaten earth whereas the walls are made by placing branches between the post and plastering it with earth and cowdung, their thickness being about 18 inches. They apply a plaster of earth on the wall, and three feet from the floor, they smear a very dark grey wash which is prepared by mixing cowdung with straw ash. There is only one door in each room and no other 342 335 342 [824] [237] [824]